

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks. Claims 3 and 17 have been canceled in this response. Claims 1, 2, 4-16 and 18-21 remain pending in the present application. Claims 4, 6, 9-16, 18 and 20 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 3, 5, 7, 17, 19 and 21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 1, 2 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ewert et al. (US Patent No. 6,493,693; hereinafter "Ewert") in view of Nomura et al. (US Patent No. 7,213,664; hereinafter "Nomura") and Spaziante et al. (US Patent Publication No. 2005/0074665; hereinafter "Spaziante"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to include the features of allowable claims 17 and 3, respectively. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 2 are allowable. Claim 8 is dependent to claim 1 or 2 and is allowable for at least its dependency. Thus, this rejection is rendered moot.

Request for Rejoinder

Claims 4, 6, 9-16, 18 and 20 were withdrawn from consideration because of an election requirement imposed by the Examiner. However, claims 4, 6, 9-16, 18 and 20 depend from allowable claims 1 and 2, respectively. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 4, 6, 9-16, 18 and 20 should be rejoined and claims 1, 2, 4-16 and 18-21 should be allowed in the present application.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Dennis P. Chen Reg. No. 61,767 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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